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ABSTRACT

The first implementation year is reported of a Classical Greek magnet program at Paul Robeson Classical Studies Middle School in Kansas City, Missouri. The following program components are summarized: educational environment, community component, multi-cultural component, athletic and health components, personal value system, classics component, and student misconduct. This formative evaluation covers five areas: student demographics, program implementation, perceptions of and attitudes toward the program, achievement levels, and the extended day program. Among the findings are the following: (1) theme implementation was evident; (2) faculty perceptions were more positive in the spring than the fall; (3) teachers disagreed about parent involvement and student discipline, and they saw facilities and student behavior as hindrances; (4) students enjoyed the physical education activities, but did not think the school was safe and more than half stated they did not want to return; (5) achievement scores were generally below district and national levels; and (6) the extended day program activities were focused on tutorial, theme-related, and enrichment areas. Enrollment goals were not met for any of the grades; grade 8 came the closest with 76 percent minority. Ten tables and figures supplement the narrative. (LB)

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Formative Evaluation
of the
Robeson Classical Studies
Magnet Middle School

1990-1991

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Evaluation Office

The School District of
Kansas City, Missouri

KANSAS CITY, MO. SCHOOL DISTRICT
"Building our future"

August 1991

FL020 428

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Formative Evaluation of the Robeson Classical Studies Magnet Middle School

1990-1991

Mark L. Seever
Program Evaluator

August 1991

Evaluation Office
Desegregation Planning Department
The School District of Kansas City, Missouri

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Executive Summary

Paul Robeson Classical Studies Middle School has completed the first year of implementing its magnet theme, Classical Greek. The program was filled to 94% capacity with more than half of the students enrolled in sixth grade. Enrollment goals were not met for any of the grades, the closest was eighth grade with 76% minority.

Site visits found evidence of theme implementation in the school. This evidence included physical development equipment, theme related exhibits, rooms with Greek names, banners, posters, art and architecture, student work and flags. Observations in randomly selected classrooms also documented infusion of major theme components in the classrooms. Other theme related activities, not part of classroom observations but occurring none the less, are included in this report.

Faculty perceptions were more positive in the spring than in the fall. Faculty enjoyed teaching at PRCS; agreed that Greek culture has been infused into the core curriculum; believed that the examination and analysis of past civilizations helped students prepare for the future; and believed the school was accomplishing its goals and objectives. Areas of concern remained. Teachers disagreed that parents were involved, and that students practiced self-discipline. Faculty mentioned staff, principal and theme as strengths of the program, while the facilities and student behavior were mentioned as hindrances.

Parents reported that their children share with them their daily activities at PRCS. PRCS was not the first choice of their children according to a large majority of the parents surveyed, while just over half did not understand the Classical Greek theme.

Students enjoyed the physical education activities at PRCS. A majority of students did not think the school was safe. More than half of the students stated that they did not want to return to PRCS next year.

ITBS achievement scores in reading, language arts, math, science and social studies were below district and national levels. The only exception was eighth grade math. MMAT scores were comparable with district levels but were below state averages. DRP scores were below both district and national levels.

The Extended Day enrollment somewhat reflected that of PRCS as a whole. Activities were focused toward three areas; tutorial, theme related and enrichment. Activities in the Extended Day program were perceived by parents as stressing academics.

Formative Evaluation of the Robeson Classical Studies Magnet Middle School

1990-1991

Introduction

The Classical Greek Magnet Program was implemented at Paul Robeson Middle School of Classical Studies (PRCS) with the start of the 1990-1991 school year. It will be temporarily located in the Ashland Middle School Building. PRCS will permanently occupy the site vacated by the Kansas City Middle School of the Arts when that school moves to its new location. The *Long-Range Magnet School Plan* (Hale & Levine, 1986) states there should be two years of formative evaluations before a summative evaluation is conducted after the third year. This report outlines PRCS's initial implementation of the magnet theme. Included in this report are demographic details, operational components, the degree to which thematic components were infused into regular classroom instruction, the achievement outcomes of the students and the school's adherence to the planning outline that was developed during the 1989-1990 school year (Robeson Classical Studies Site Task Force, 1990).

Program Description

The initial implementation of the Classical Greek Magnet Program took place at Pitcher Classical Greek Magnet and Woodland Classical Greek Magnet elementary schools during the 1989-1990 school year in accordance with the district's *Long-Range Magnet School Plan* (LRMP). The LRMP called for Classical Greek theme implementation in three elementary schools, one middle school and one senior high school. PRCS is the middle school selected to implement this theme. The Classical Greek Program, as defined in the LRMP, will be for those students who want a strong liberal arts education which reflects the classical Greek ideal of a strong mind and a strong body.

The program will be characterized by a consistent emphasis on the physical and mental development of the student. A rigorous academic program will be enhanced by a challenging

physical education regimen. Students in this program should plan to continue their studies past the secondary level, by enrolling in a college, a junior college or a vocational program.

The curriculum of the Classical Greek Program will emphasize study skills, research techniques, decision making, problem solving and team building. Independent learning will be a key factor for students in these magnet schools.

Evaluation Design

This evaluation of PRCS focuses upon the initial implementation of the program during the first year of operation and will address the following questions:

1. What are the student demographics of the school?
2. To what degree is the program being implemented as designed in the Robeson planning outline?
3. What are the perceptions of parents, students, teachers and resource personnel regarding the program?
4. What are the reading, language arts, math, science and social studies achievement levels across each grade level as measured by tests selected by the Kansas City, Missouri School District?
5. What services are provided in the Extended Day Program, and what are the racial demographics of the Extended Day students?

Demographic data were collected and reviewed to report the racial composition of the student body, as well as enrollment in the Extended Day Program.

On-site visits were made to ascertain operational components of the program. These components include the availability of materials and resources, course offerings and the general environment of the school. Observations were held to determine the extent to which thematic components were taking place in regular classrooms and school-wide.

Outcomes on achievement tests are reported by grade level and minority status.

Surveys were administered to teachers, students and parents to gain their perceptions of the program. Items focused on program implementation, the degree to which the program accomplished its goals and objectives during the 1990-1991 school year, parental involvement, the attitudes and reactions of the students and implementation of the program components.

Results

Enrollment

Program capacity. To determine whether PRCS reached its program capacity, data used by KCMSD's Admissions Office for the placement of students in magnet programs and data from the Research Office were reviewed. The results are presented in Table 1 by grade level. Sixth grade was at 173% capacity, indicating it attracted 124 more students than needed. Seventh grade fell 53 students below capacity, reaching 69% of the desired enrollment. A shortage of 101 students was revealed in eighth grade, 33% of capacity. Overall, PRCS was 30 students below expectations indicating a 94% capacity level.

Minority and non-minority enrollment. The Federal court has specified enrollment goals (60% minority, 40% non-minority) as a measure of the effectiveness of accomplishing desegregation reform efforts. Enrollment figures cited in this report were drawn from the student membership reports prepared by the district's Research Office (1990). Figures are based on enrollment data reported on the fourth Wednesday in September.

Enrollment and racial composition results for PRCS are presented in Table 2 by grade level for 1990-1991. Eighth grade came closest to district expectations (76% minority, 24% non-minority) yet there were only 49 students. The minority enrollment percentage in seventh grade was 89% while 86% in sixth grade. Overall, racial composition of PRCS's student body was 86% minority, 14% non-minority.

Table 1

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Capacity & Actual Enrollment
by Grade - September 1990

Grade	Program Capacity[1]	Actual[2]	Difference	% of Capacity
Six	170	294	+ 124	173%
Seven	170	117	-53	69%
Eight	150	49	-101	33%
Total	490	460	-30	94%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

1 Program capacity utilized by the Admissions Office when placing students in magnet programs.

2 From *September 26, 1990 Student Membership* (Research Office, 1990).

Table 2

Paul Robeson Classical Studies .
Minority & Non-Minority Enrollment
by Grade - September 1990

	Minority		Non-Minority		
Grade	N	%	N	%	Total
Six	253	86%	41	14%	294
Seven	104	89%	13	11%	117
Eight	37	76%	12	24%	49
School Total	394	86%	66	14%	460

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent. Enrollment figures are from *September 26, 1990, Student Membership* (Research Office, 1990).

Enrollment goals were set in the PRCS Planning Outline (Robeson Classical Studies Task Force, 1990). The school was projected to average 500 students in the first and second year of implementation, then expand to 900 in subsequent years. There was a total of 460 students enrolled in 1990-1991, a shortfall of 40 students.

Program Implementation

To determine the extent of program implementation, data were collected during site visits, classroom observations and by reviewing documents supplied by the school. Results of these activities are presented in the following sections.

Visible evidence. The casual visitor to PRCS would not have any difficulty in identifying the theme being implemented. In most observed sites visible evidence was common. Site observations for type of physical evidence found that 35% were physical development equipment located in the gym and adjoining hallways. Special exhibits accounted for 30% of the visible evidence and were found mostly in the hallways and in several classrooms. Types of exhibits included information on historical figures, flags of various countries, information about different cultures and nutrition. Twelve percent of the school sites observed at PRCS were referred to with Greek names. Banners accounted for nine percent of the evidence and were found in hallways. Six percent of the visible evidence were posters, again found in hallways. Art and architecture were displayed four percent of the time and included student made pillows and columns. Student work exhibited in the hallways and classroom were found

to make up two percent of the evidence. Flags were displayed in classrooms two percent of the time.

Classroom observations. Observations in randomly selected classrooms were conducted, across all subject areas, to determine the degree of program implementation. An observation consisted of 15 minutes with each minute representing a new observation interval. One thousand two hundred sixty-one minutes of classroom observation intervals, involving 1443 students, were completed for this evaluation.

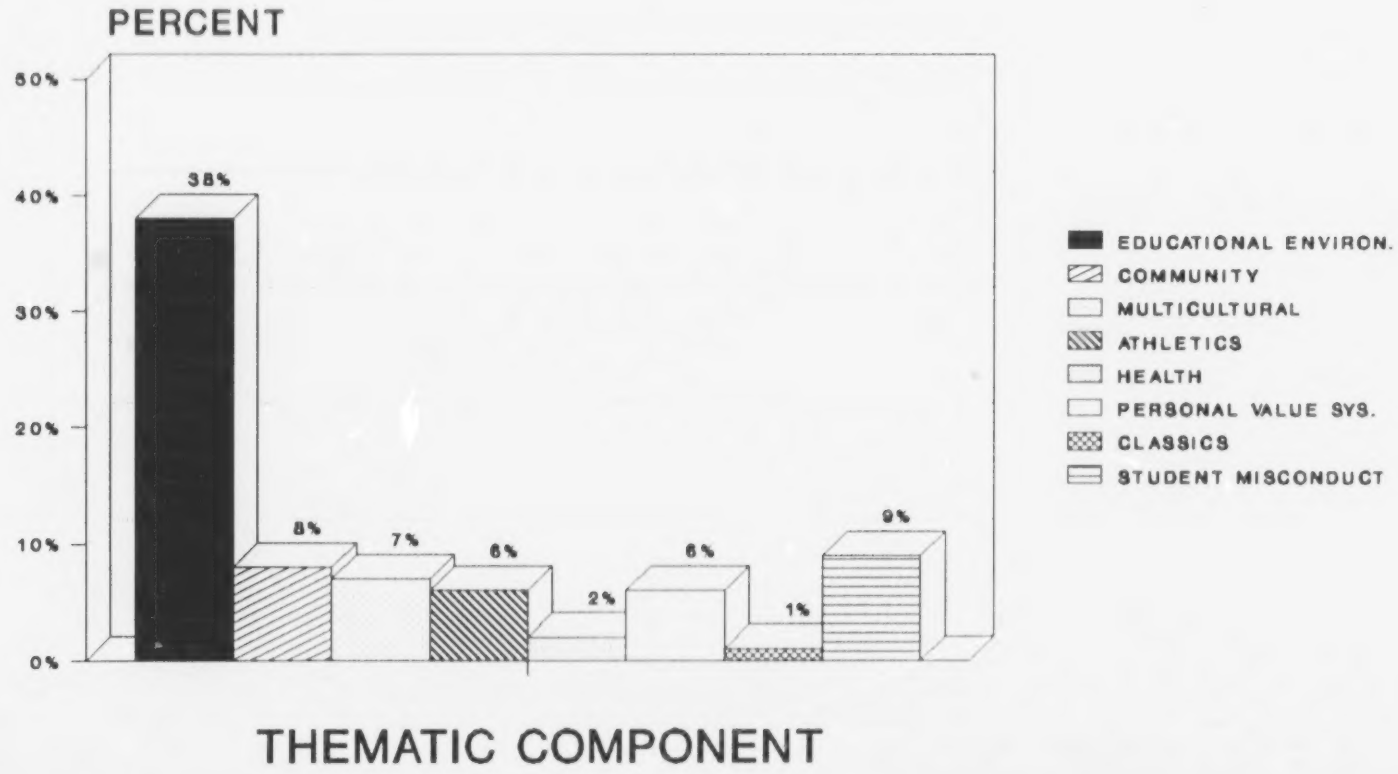
After reviewing the planning outline, seven program components were identified: 1)educational environment, 2)community, 3)multi-cultural, 4)athletics, 5)health, 6)personal value system and 7)classics. In addition, student misconduct was observed. Results of classroom observations based on these eight areas are presented in Figure 1. The reader is cautioned that there are no established standards on what is the ideal degree of implementation. The following percentages only describe what was occurring in PRCS's initial year of implementation.

Educational environment. PRCS's planning outline described the educational environment of the school as utilizing a holistic approach. Multi-technique instruction was to be employed while creating an atmosphere which was student-centered, allowing for self-expression and personal growth. Activities related to the educational environment were observed in 38% of the observation intervals.

Community component. The community component included activities designed to help students learn about civic responsibility. Students were to learn how to set, and develop plans to achieve, individual as well as group goals. A student council and student court were to be established. This component was observed in classrooms eight percent of the time.

Activities related to this component that were not part of the classroom observations are presented below. Students were involved in a coat and blanket drive for Project Warmth and a food drive for Thanksgiving and Christmas during the first semester. In November a political campaign was run culminating in the election of a student council. Two assemblies were planned by the council in March. Meetings were bi-weekly with the first 30 minutes devoted to student council business, followed by the student court held during the last hour. Three volunteer lawyers from the speakers' bureau of Kansas City's Metropolitan Bar Association/Young Lawyers Section met with and trained students, and helped conduct the court.

FIGURE 1
PAUL ROBESON CLASSICAL STUDIES
THEME INFUSION



CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Among the field trips taken this year, one was to Northeast Law & Public Service Magnet to observe court room procedures.

Multi-cultural component. Students were to become aware of different cultures, study and critique other cultures, read literary works, stories, folktales, lore, legends and myths of other countries. Classroom observations revealed this component seven percent of the time.

Supportive evidence for the implementation of this component, but not observed in classrooms, is discussed below. Sixth graders experienced multi-cultural and art activities when they participated in a field trip to the Renaissance Festival. Field trips to Woodland and Paige allowed students to try out their storytelling abilities. *Storytelling*, a book of stories written by sixth graders, was assembled. Seventh grade language arts classes put together *Myths and Monsters*, a volume containing mythological stories they developed.

Athletic component. Physical education, Olympic sports, physical development and physical fitness constituted this component. Observations revealed these activities in six percent of the intervals. Related activities, but not seen during classroom observations, are discussed in the following section.

Students were administered the Basic Essential Skills Test (BEST) for physical fitness and the Harvard Step Test for cardiovascular endurance during the first and again in the second semester. Further tests were administered to detect abnormal curvatures of the spine and discrepancies in range of motion of all joints in the body. There were basketball and volleyball games between students and faculty and a seventh grade basketball tournament. Twenty-two students participated in a youth bowling league on Saturdays. Students, in their physical development classes, gained experience in wrestling, weight training, flag football, track and field, basketball and swimming. Information about correct posture and weight control was also shared with students. The Olympic Track and Field competition was held at the East High School Track. Students had to qualify in the preliminaries in order to compete in the finals. There were eight events for both boys and girls.

Health component. The health component included activities and information about health and nutrition. This component was found during two percent of the intervals.

Personal value system. This component consisted of programs designed to teach students self-discipline, respect, tolerance, cooperation and sensitivity. Classroom observations revealed that students were involved in these activities six percent of the time.

Classics component. Students were to be exposed to classical art, drama, literature and architecture. Activities related to this component were observed one percent of the time.

In addition to classroom observations, there was other evidence of the classics component being implemented. There were field trips to the Midland Theatre and Music Hall in order to study ballet and dance as art forms. Students watched a performance of Living in Exile, which depicts parts of the Iliad at the Unicorn Theatre. A field trip to the Folly Theatre involved students reading classical literature, then watching a presentation of that literature on stage.

Student misconduct. Because students at PRCS were to learn about and acquire positive characteristics, it was decided to measure incidents of student misconduct as another way at getting at program implementation. Student behavior that took significant teacher time away from the class was counted in this component. Classroom observations found this component in nine percent of the intervals.

Perceptions

Teacher perceptions. In the Spring, faculty completed a perception survey on the progress of theme implementation at PRCS. Data were collected from 34 staff members and the results are presented in Table 3. Generally, faculty perceptions were positive about PRCS's first year of implementation. When asked if they enjoyed being at PRCS, 91% of those surveyed agreed (item 1). Ninety percent of the faculty agreed that Greek culture had been infused into PRCS's core curriculum (item 14). The examination and analysis of past civilizations help students prepare for the future according to 97% of those surveyed (item 18). Asked if PRCS was accomplishing its goals and objectives 91% of the respondents agreed (item 23), which represented an increase of 11 percentage points over fall's results.

There were areas of concern however; 53% of those surveyed agreed that the climate of the school was good (item 3). When asked if the facilities at PRCS were conducive to the program's goals, 52% of the respondents agreed (item 6). Although this is low, it represents an increase of 16 percentage points over fall. Most parents are not involved at PRCS according to 75% of the faculty (item 8). Two-thirds of those surveyed do not believe that students at PRCS practice self-discipline (item 19), which represents a decrease of 13 percentage points from the fall survey.

Large differences between fall and spring surveys occurred, in addition to those listed above, on several items. When asked if they were getting the support they needed from the

Table 3

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Teacher Perceptions, 1991

Item	Content	Responses	Spring N	Spring %
1.	I enjoy teaching at Robeson Classical Studies.	Agree	30	91%
		Disagree	3	9%
2.	The building administration has provided the support I need to conduct my classes.	Agree	26	77%
		Disagree	8	24%
3.	I believe the climate (relations, attitudes, feelings, tone, etc.) of the school is good.	Agree	18	53%
		Disagree	16	47%
4.	The academic support services (counselors, office staff, etc.) have provided the support I need to conduct my classes.	Agree	29	85%
		Disagree	5	15%
5.	The physical plant support services (maintenance, janitorial, etc.) have provided the support I need to conduct my classes.	Agree	27	79%
		Disagree	7	21%
6.	The facilities at Robeson are conducive to the program's goals and objectives.	Agree	17	52%
		Disagree	16	49%
7.	I find the activities covered in staff development sessions at Robeson Classical Studies helped me in the classroom.	Agree	23	77%
		Disagree	7	23%
8.	I believe most parents are involved at Robeson Classical Studies.	Agree	8	25%
		Disagree	24	75%
9.	I believe the study of the classics will improve most students' academic achievement.	Agree	25	83%
		Disagree	5	17%
10.	The physical education program at Robeson Classical Studies is more extensive than at other middle schools.	Agree	21	70%
		Disagree	9	30%
11.	I believe most students are benefitting from the physical education program at Robeson.	Agree	22	73%
		Disagree	8	27%
12.	Most students respond to the holistic approach at Robeson Classical Studies.	Agree	24	83%
		Disagree	5	17%
13.	Students are exposed to many different cultural experiences at Robeson.	Agree	27	82%
		Disagree	6	18%
14.	Greek culture (myths, art, architecture, etc.) has been infused into Robeson Classical Studies core curriculum.	Agree	28	90%
		Disagree	3	10%
15.	I regularly infuse Greek culture and other curriculum components into classroom activities.	Agree	26	84%
		Disagree	5	16%
16.	Students have the opportunity to practice civic responsibility (student government, community involvement, etc.).	Agree	24	83%
		Disagree	5	17%
17.	I believe most students at Robeson feel good about themselves.	Agree	21	66%
		Disagree	11	34%
18.	Examination and analysis of past civilizations help students prepare for the future.	Agree	29	97%
		Disagree	1	3%

Table 3 (Continued)

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Teacher Perceptions, 1991

Item Content	Responses	Spring N	Spring %
19. Students at Robeson practice self-discipline.	Agree	11	34%
	Disagree	21	66%
20. After background information, students are able to make wise decisions about health and nutrition.	Agree	21	72%
	Disagree	8	28%
21. The Extended Day Program is being well implemented.	Agree	19	63%
	Disagree	11	37%
22. I teach in the Extended Day Program.	Agree	18	53%
	Disagree	16	47%
23. Overall, I feel Robeson Classical Studies is accomplishing its goals and objectives.	Agree	30	91%
	Disagree	3	9%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

physical plant support services 79% agreed (item 5), a decrease of 11 percentage points from the fall. Eighty-two percent of the respondents agreed that students were exposed to many different cultural experiences at PRCS (item 13), representing a ten percentage point gain. Most students feel good about themselves according to 66% of the respondents, an increase of 12 percentage points from the fall survey (item 17). When asked if students responded to the holistic approach at PRCS 83% agreed which represented an increase of 18 percentage points (item 12).

Faculty were asked to comment on both the strong points of the program and the hindrances to program implementation.Comments are summarized here if they were included on at least 10% of the surveys. The faculty was mentioned as a strength on 21% of the surveys, while the principal was included on 12%. Eighteen percent stated that the infusion of the theme was the strength of the program. Importance of a good mind and body was mentioned by 12% of the respondents.

The building was mentioned on 32% of the surveys as a hindrance to program implementation. Twenty-four percent of those surveyed included student behavior as hindering implementation.

Parent perceptions. In May, phone interviews were conducted with randomly selected parents concerning program implementation at PRCS. Completed surveys for 108 parents

were collected and the results are presented in Table 4. Overall, 71% of the parents were satisfied with PRCS (item 10). The child usually shares his day's activities at PRCS with his parent (item 18) according to 91% of the respondents.

When asked if PRCS was their child's first choice (item 3) 70% of the parents disagreed. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents did not understand the Classical Greek theme (item 12).

In open-ended questions, parents were asked how they learned about PRCS and why they chose to send their kids there. Twenty-nine percent of the parents stated that they learned about PRCS through the district's office. The district gave them no choice in selecting a school according to 59% of the respondents, while 12% cited the theme as the reason for picking PRCS.

Student perceptions. Late in the second semester students were surveyed about the first year of theme implementation at PRCS. Results compiled from 110 completed surveys are presented in Table 5. Eighty-six percent of the students surveyed liked the physical education activities at PRCS (item 5).

PRCS is not kept clean according to 75% of the students surveyed (item 7). When asked if their school was safe, 56% of the respondents disagreed (item 10). Fifty-eight percent of those surveyed, stated that they did not want to go to PRCS next year (item 14).

Achievement

ITBS. A summary of data from 1991 Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) is presented in Table 6, by grade level and minority status. Reading, language, math, science and social studies scores for PRCS and the Kansas City, Missouri School District are displayed as percentile ranks converted from mean grade equivalents. Scores were also compared to the national norm (50th percentile). PRCS scores ranged from 46 in seventh grade science to 25 in seventh grade reading, with none of the scores reaching national levels. Eighth grade math, 40, was the only score above district levels. Differences ranged from 6 percentile points above the district average in eighth grade math to 16 below in eighth grade science.

When scores are broken down by minority status, minority students scored lower than their non-minority counterparts. Minority students' percentile ranks ranged from 45 in seventh grade science to 24 in seventh grade reading, while non-minority scores went from 72 in eighth grade language to 32 in seventh grade reading. Scores for minority students ranged from three

Table 4

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Parent Perceptions, 1991

Item	Content	Responses	Spring N	Spring %
1.	The way students are selected for magnet schools is fair.	Agree	58	57%
		Disagree	43	43%
2.	My child's application to the Classical Studies Magnet was handled in a reasonable amount of time.	Agree	67	64%
		Disagree	38	36%
3.	Robeson Middle School of Classical Studies Magnet was my child's first choice.	Agree	32	30%
		Disagree	74	70%
4.	Communications from Robeson have been helpful and understandable to me.	Agree	78	75%
		Disagree	26	25%
5.	My participation at Robeson is encouraged.	Agree	87	81%
		Disagree	21	19%
6.	Overall, the administration at Robeson is responsive to my concerns.	Agree	86	80%
		Disagree	21	20%
7.	Overall, I am satisfied with the teachers at Robeson.	Agree	82	76%
		Disagree	26	24%
8.	I am satisfied with the progress my child has made in basic skills areas at Robeson.	Agree	76	72%
		Disagree	29	28%
9.	I am satisfied with the progress my child has made in physical education classes at Robeson.	Agree	85	83%
		Disagree	18	18%
10.	Overall, I am satisfied with Robeson.	Agree	75	71%
		Disagree	30	29%
11.	My child enjoys participating in art activities at Robeson.	Agree	68	64%
		Disagree	38	36%
12.	I understand the Classical Greek magnet theme.	Agree	46	43%
		Disagree	62	57%
13.	Overall, my child feels good about the education he/she is receiving at Robeson.	Agree	79	74%
		Disagree	28	26%
14.	I believe that Robeson is kept clean and in good repair.	Agree	88	86%
		Disagree	14	14%
15.	I believe that Robeson offers a quality education to all students.	Agree	78	75%
		Disagree	26	25%
16.	I believe Robeson offers a safe environment for my child.	Agree	83	78%
		Disagree	24	22%
17.	My child enjoys reading and discussing classical drama and literature.	Agree	58	54%
		Disagree	50	46%
18.	My child usually shares with me his/her day's activities at Robeson.	Agree	97	91%
		Disagree	10	9%

Table 4 (Continued)

Paul Robeseon Classical Studies
Parent Perceptions, 1991

Item Content	Responses	Spring N	Spring %
19. My child enjoys the swimming program at Robeson.	Agree	82	77%
	Disagree	25	23%
20. I would recommend Robeson to other parents.	Agree	76	72%
	Disagree	30	28%
21. My child rides a bus or taxi to school.	Agree	102	97%
	Disagree	3	3%
22. The transportation of my child to and from Robeson is done in a reasonable amount of time.[1]	Agree	92	89%
	Disagree	11	11%
23. I believe the transportation of my child to and from Robeson is provided safely.[1]	Agree	85	83%
	Disagree	17	17%
24. My child attends the Extended Day Program.	Agree	60	62%
	Disagree	37	38%
25. I believe the Extended Day Program gives enough emphasis to academic activities.[2]	Agree	55	92%
	Disagree	5	8%
26. The Extended Day Program was one of the reasons I decided to send my child to Robeson.[2]	Agree	44	73%
	Disagree	16	27%
27. All of my middle school age children go to Robeson.	Agree	99	97%
	Disagree	3	3%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

1 Asked only of those parents agreeing with item 21.

2 Asked only of those parents agreeing with item 24.

percentile ranks below non-minority scores in seventh grade language to 43 below in eighth grade social studies.

Caution is advised in interpreting the preceding results because of large differences between the number of minority and non-minority students taking the tests. In all three grades, roughly six times as many minority students took the sub-tests than non-minority students.

MMAT. The Missouri Mastery and Achievement Tests (MMAT) is a set of criterion referenced tests designed by the state and first administered in 1987. The tests are administered to students in grades three, six, eight and ten. Results of the MMAT for 1991 are presented for grades six and eight in Table 7. Mean scale scores for reading/language arts, math, science and social studies are displayed for PRCS, the district and the state of Missouri. According to the *MMAT, Guide to Score Interpretation and Use*, (Missouri Department of

Table 5

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Student Perceptions, 1991

Item Content	Responses	Spring N	Spring %
1. I like coming to school every day.	Agree	81	74%
	Disagree	29	26%
2. I feel welcome in all my classes.	Agree	73	66%
	Disagree	37	34%
3. I think the rules at Robeson are too strict.	Agree	64	59%
	Disagree	45	41%
4. I like doing the homework assignments the teachers give me.	Agree	54	51%
	Disagree	52	49%
5. I like the physical education activities at Robeson.	Agree	92	86%
	Disagree	15	14%
6. I like the teachers at Robeson.	Agree	59	56%
	Disagree	46	44%
7. I think this is a clean school.	Agree	27	25%
	Disagree	82	75%
8. I have learned a lot about communities this year.	Agree	61	56%
	Disagree	48	44%
9. We have a student government at Robeson.	Agree	68	63%
	Disagree	40	37%
10. I think my school is safe.	Agree	47	44%
	Disagree	60	56%
11. I ride in a taxi or bus to school.	Agree	93	85%
	Disagree	17	15%
12. I think it takes too long to get to school in the morning.[1]	Agree	42	39%
	Disagree	67	62%
13. I think it takes too long to get home after school.[1]	Agree	52	48%
	Disagree	57	52%
14. I want to come back to Robeson next year.	Agree	45	42%
	Disagree	62	58%
15. I go to Extended Day.	Agree	55	55%
	Disagree	45	45%
16. I like the activities at Extended Day.[2]	Agree	63	68%
	Disagree	30	32%
17. I think Extended Day helps me with my grades.[2]	Agree	43	46%
	Disagree	51	54%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

1 Asked only of those students agreeing with item 11.

2 Asked only of those students agreeing with item 15.

Table 6

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Iowa Tests of Basic Skills Percentile Ranks
by Grade and Minority Status
Spring 1991

Test Grade	Min.	Non-Min.	Total	District
Reading				
Six	27	41	29	33
Seven	24	32	25	38
Eight	26	57	31	39
Language				
Six	32	36	32	39
Seven	37	40	37	43
Eight	30	72	37	44
Math				
Six	26	34	27	34
Seven	26	36	27	34
Eight	35	59	40	34
Science				
Six	36	47	38	51
Seven	45	53	46	52
Eight	28	50	31	47
Social Studies				
Six	37	49	39	46
Seven	33	50	35	39
Eight	28	71	34	39

Note Percentile ranks converted from mean grade equivalents.

Elementary and Secondary Education, 1991), meaningful strengths or weaknesses between groups can be determined using the average student error of measurement of 25. Using this criterion, PRCS scores are comparable to those of the district, but are weak in comparison to state scores across all content areas.

DRP. The Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP) is a criterion referenced test that measures a student's ability to read prose at various levels of difficulty. Scores are reported as DRP units, which teachers may use as instructional tools. Results of the DRP for 1991 are presented by grade level in Table 8. Instructional level scores for PRCS, the district and national norms are displayed as percentile ranks converted from mean DRP units. PRCS percentile scores ranged from 31 in eighth grade to 24 in sixth. When compared to the district

Table 7

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Missouri Mastery & Achievement Tests
Average Scale Scores for
Grades Six and Eight, 1991

Test Grade	Robeson	District	State
Reading/Language Arts			
Six	218	225	296
Eight	249	272	318
Mathematics			
Six	254	267	347
Eight	271	270	331
Science			
Six	257	268	352
Eight	251	271	339
Social Studies/Civics			
Six	248	257	330
Eight	234	259	315

Table 8

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Degrees of Reading Power Test
Percentile Ranks by Grade
Spring 1991

Grade	Robeson	District	National
Six	24	26	50
Seven	25	35	50
Eight	31	33	50

Note: Percentile ranks are based on mean DRP scores.

the differences went from two percentile ranks below in both sixth and eighth grade to ten below in seventh grade, while PRCS scores were well below the national average.

Extended Day Program

Program description. Middle schools, generally, do not have an Extended Day Program, but starting in the second semester one was implemented at PRCS. Offered only after school, the Extended Day Program at PRCS was designed to offer tutorial, theme related and

enrichment activities students would not normally have received. Tutorial activities were offered in math, reading, language arts and science.

Theme related activities included volleyball, swimming, tumbling, storytelling, drama club, student council, basketball, following directions, problem solving, weight training, athletic training club, art, crafts and fitness/aerobics. Enrichment activities consisted of math, reading, chess club, talent show, science, camera club, band, choir, industrial technology, computer and yearbook.

Enrollment. PRCS Extended Day Program enrollment and racial composition results are presented in Table 9 by grade level for 1991. The Extended Day enrollment in both sixth and eighth grades was 53% of the total number of students in those grades, while 37% of the seventh graders at PRCS were enrolled in the program. When combined, 49% of PRCS's students were enrolled in the Extended Day Program.

The demographic make-up of the program somewhat reflected that of the school overall. The percentage of minority students enrolled in the program at the eighth grade level was 85% compared to 76% for the school. The minority enrollment percentage was 90% for sixth grade and 86% for seventh, both within four percentage points of the school's overall composition.

Ninety-two percent of the parents whose children attended the Extended Day program, stated that the program gives enough emphasis to academic activities. Sixth-eight percent of the students surveyed, who indicated that they participated in Extended Day activities, liked

Table 9

Paul Robeson Classical Studies
Extended Day Program Enrollment
by Grade Level and Minority Status

	Minority		Non-Minority		Total	
Grade	N	%	N	%	N	%[1]
Sixth	139	90%	16	10%	155	53%
Seventh	37	86%	6	14%	43	37%
Eighth	22	85%	4	15%	26	53%
Total	198	88%	26	12%	224	49%

Note: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

1 Percentage of total school enrollment.

those activities. The program did not help with their grades according to 54% of the students surveyed.

Summary and Recommendations

PRCS finished its first year of theme implementation with the end of the 1990-1991 school year. Enrollment, observation, perception and achievement data were examined to determine the degree and success of theme implementation. Also the enrollment and activities of the Extended Day Program were presented and discussed.

Enrollment data indicate that PRCS was within six percentage points of capacity. On closer review seventh and eighth grades were under capacity, 69% and 33% respectively, while sixth grade was well over capacity at 173%. PRCS did not meet its enrollment goals of 60% minority, 40% non-minority, eighth grade came closest with 76% minority. When taken as a whole, PRCS's enrollment was 86% minority, 14% non-minority.

Site visits found evidence of theme implementation consisting of physical development equipment, special exhibits, rooms with Greek names, banners, posters, art and architecture, student work and flags. Classroom observations documented the occurrence of major thematic components in classrooms. The educational environment component was observed most frequently, 38% of the time.

Faculty enjoyed teaching at PRCS, reported that they were infusing Greek culture into classroom activities and believed that PRCS was obtaining its goals. They did not agree that PRCS's facilities were conducive to its goals and objectives. Teachers were not satisfied with the level of parental involvement at PRCS and did not agree that the climate of the school was good. A majority of teachers did not think that students practiced self-discipline. Faculty, principal, infusion of the theme and the importance of the mind and body were identified by the teachers as strengths of the program. Hindrances to theme implementation mentioned by the teachers included the facilities and student behavior.

Parents stated that their children shared their daily activities at PRCS with them. Also parents agreed that the Extended Day program stressed academics. Most parents stated that PRCS was not their child's first choice, and that they did not understand the Classical Greek theme. Twenty-nine percent of the parents learned about PRCS through the district's office. When asked why they sent their child to PRCS 59% stated that the district picked the school for their child, while 12% mentioned the theme.

A large majority of students stated that they liked the physical education activities at PRCS. A large number of students did not think that PRCS was kept clean, nor that it was a safe school. Fifty-eight percent of the students surveyed did not want to return PRCS next year.

Reading, language arts, math, science and social studies ITBS scores were below district levels for each grade and sub-test except eighth grade math at PRCS. When broken down by minority status, scores for minority students were below their non-minority counterparts. Large differences between the number of minority and non-minority students taking the test, prevent conclusions being drawn. Sixth and eighth grade MMAT scores were comparable to district levels but were weak when compared to state scores across all content areas. DRP scores were below district and national levels across all grade levels.

The Extended Day Program's enrollment was somewhat similar to that of PRCS enrollment as a whole. Forty-nine percent of the students participated at least once in an Extended Day Program activity. The program's focus was tutorial, theme-related and enrichment.

The following recommendations are offered based on findings presented in this evaluation:

1. Increase parental involvement and educate parents about the Classical Greek theme at PRCS. Three-fourths of the teachers disagree that parents are involved at PRCS. Although most parents stated that they are encouraged to participate few appear to be doing so. Over half admitted to not understanding the Classical Greek theme. Ninety-one percent of the parents reported that their children share their daily activities at PRCS with them, both parts of this recommendation might be accomplished through the students.

2. Explore student behavior and the handling of that behavior by administration, faculty and staff. When asked what hinders theme implementation 24% of the faculty mentioned student behavior. More than half of the students disagreed that PRCS was a safe school, while 58% did not want to come back next year. A clear concise behavior code book listing behaviors and consequences could be developed, shared with students and closely followed.

3. Increase efforts aimed at recruiting students, especially non-minority. Although PRCS was filled to 94% of capacity, two-thirds of those students were sixth graders. According to 70% of parents surveyed, PRCS was not the first choice of their child. This could explain results referred to in the second recommendation above; students misbehaving, school not being considered safe and not wanting to return. However, both actions should be taken. Recruiting efforts should be targeted to the Classical Greek elementary schools where there are students who want to be in the Classical Greek theme. A good selling point may be the addition of Central Senior. PRCS had a minority enrollment of 86%, far from the goal set by the court. Non-minority enrollment needs to increase to reach the desired level of 60% minority, 40% non-minority.

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